**MINUTES OF THE**

**FOREST ACRES CITY COUNCIL**

**February 11, 2025**

Mayor Tom Andrews, Mayor Pro-tem David Black, Council members Haskell Kibler, Ryan Newton, and Stephen Oliver were present, along with City Administrator Shaun Greenwood, Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Andy Smith, Police Chief Don Robinson, and City Attorney Will Dillard.

**Mayor Tom Andrews called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.**

1. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Council member Ryan Newton led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Approval of Minutes**
	1. City Council Meeting January 14, 2025

On a motion by Mr. Black seconded by Mr. Oliver, Council unanimously approved the minutes as amended.

* 1. Special City Council Meeting January 22, 2025

On a motion by Mr. Black seconded by Mr. Oliver, Council unanimously approved the minutes as amended.

1. **Mayor’s Issues & City Projects**
	1. Follow up from Community Forum Discussion:
		1. Speeding complaint during school hours on Clemson Ave.

Administrator Greenwood stated that we have multiple approaches to this matter. FAPD is patrolling more, and we are talking with SCDOT about a possible four-way stop or adding two speed humps. Mr. Greenwood stated he will have more information for Council soon.

* + 1. Sink hole complaint on Lakeshore

Mr. Greenwood said that our City Attorney has reviewed the documents that the residents provided and determined that their best path will be to seek representation of some kind and to continue contacting Richland County.

1. **Public Comment Related to Items on the Agenda:**

Citizens that wish to speak about an item specifically listed on the agenda must call 803-782-9475 by 5 pm the day before the meeting to be added to the list of speakers.

 Helen Russell introduced herself and spoke on behalf of the Bankhead Smash Cancer Tennis Tournament and the Htax funds for which they applied.

1. **New Business:**
	1. FAPD: Introductions of new employees and promotions

Chief Robinson introduced our new dispatcher, Chase Burdick, promoted Lance Corporal Ebony Ivy to Corporal, promoted Officer Jacob Meyers to Corporal, and Corporal Louis Gantt to Sergeant.

* 1. Introduction of new Building Inspector

Building Official/City Engineer Keith Lindler introduced Jeremy Burrows as our new Combination Building Inspector. Jeremy also recently obtained his Certified Building Official certification.

* 1. Resolution recognizing the service and dedication of Andy Smith

Mayor Andrews recognized the service and dedication Andy Smith has given to Forest Acres over the last eleven years.

* 1. Presentation of the Annual Audit

Jessica Berry of the Brittingham Group stated that the audit resulted in no significant findings and that a clean and unmodified opinion of the city’s financial statements has been issued.

* 1. Htax Committee Recommendations:
		1. AC Flora Booster Club: $2,250 Super Saturday Event

On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Kibler, Council unanimously approved the requested amount.

* 1. Midlands Light Opera: $2,450 Pirates of Penzance

On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Kibler, Council unanimously approved the requested amount.

* 1. Rockbridge Club: $10,000 Bankhead Smash Cancer Tennis Tournament

On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Black, Council unanimously approved the requested amount.

* 1. Staff Request for Htax: Sweep the Acres: $1,200

Mr. Greenwood said that we are hoping to get enough sponsors so that the Htax funds are not necessary, however, we are asking for the authorization if needed.

On a motion by Mr. Kibler seconded by Mr. Oliver, Council unanimously approved the request.

* 1. Approval of a letter to AC Flora High School related to Hospitality Tax funding requests

Administration is asking that AC Flora make one unified application for their different Htax requests beginning in 2026.

On a motion by Mr. Newton seconded by Mr. Kibler, Council unanimously authorized Mr. Greenwood to compose and send a letter.

h. Appointment and Reappointments

 a. Beautification Foundation – 1 Vacancy

i. Andrew Epting

On a motion by Mr. Black seconded by Mr. Oliver, Council unanimously appointed Mr.

Epting to the Beautification Foundation.

b. Comet Board – 1 Vacancy

On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Kibler, Council approved the appointment of Mayor Andrews to the Comet Board. Mayor Andrews did not vote but graciously accepted.

Andy Smith introduced Maurice Pearl as the new CEO of the COMET.

1. **Old Business:**
	1. Second Reading: AN ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF FOREST ACRES, STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 21 (ZONING ORDINANCE) TO ADD PROVISIONS REGULATING HOURS OF OPERATION OF BUSINESSES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Black, Council unanimously agreed to defer to the March City Council meeting.

* 1. Second Reading: AN ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF FOREST ACRES, STATE OF SOUTH

CAROLINA, PROVIDING THAT THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CITY OF FOREST ACRES, BE AMENDED BY ADDING A SECTION OF SAID CODE; PROVIDING FOR THE

ANNEXATION OF 4657 SYLVAN DRIVE, RICHLAND COUNTY TAX MAP NUMBER

14116-07-18

 On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Black, Council unanimously approved the annexation.

1. **City Administrator Report:**
	1. Richland Mall Update

Mr. Greenwood reported that the demolition continues, and the demolition company is saying they are on track to finish in weeks not months if the weather permits.

* 1. Budget Preparation

We are in the beginning of budget preparation for the FY 25-26 fiscal year. We had our meeting with FAPD for their needs and plans. We are also talking with Administration staff about their needs.

* 1. Entryway Sign

We are working on a design for an entryway sign on Forest Drive. Once we receive the bids we will present them to Council for final approval.

* 1. City Parks

The September hurricane destroyed many trees at our parks which affected the shade. Land Plan South is working on a concept for a new seating and shaded area at Citadel Park. They are also working on the surface needs at Citadel and Quinine Hill Park.

* 1. Business License Renewal

Renewals for 2025 business license renewals have begun. The notices went out and included a QR code for the business license renewal portal.

* 1. Job Shadowing

We had kids from local schools shadow Mayor Andrews, Mr. Greenwood and a few officers last week.

* 1. Zoning Ordinance Update

Module Three, which includes six different articles, will be presented to the Planning Commission next week.

1. **Finance Director Report:** Monthly Financial Report

Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Smith reported that we recognized 34.7% of revenues which includes a significant property tax check from Richland County. On the expense side we recognize 54% of our anticipated expenses for the year. We have opened a new bank account for the Richland Mall park project. Hospitality tax revenue is doing well this year. We have recognized 67% of our 58% target through January 2025.

1. **Police Chief’s Report:**

Chief Robinson reported the January 2025 crime and traffic statistics to Council.

Speed deterrent surveys have been set on both ends of Forest Drive and Bethel Church.

FAPD should be fully staffed by the end of March 2025.

1. **Community Forum:**

Non-resident Austin Coleman lives near Forest Acres and thanked FAPD for patrolling more on Clemson Drive. It has helped with the speeding problems.

Resident Kathy Marie Davis asked if Code Enforcement would check the new construction on Satchel Ford Road and the trails of stormwater runoff.

1. **Council Items:**

Mr. Oliver asked about the tree debris at Satchel Ford Elementary. Mr. Greenwood said that we will call the Richland County Superintendents office to report the pile of debris.

Mayor Andrews attended the Mayor’s Design Fellowship in Charleston and used his time to discuss a potential walking trail from Gamewell Drive to the Cooper Library. Our Gills Creek project was also positively discussed.

Mayor Andrews reported that on Monday he met with Solicitor Byron Gipson about Public Safety issues.

He stated he forcefully argued that bond should be opposed for the recent shooting in Forest Acres.

Ryan Newton recognized Mayor Andrews for being selected to the fifty most influential in Columbia.

1. **Executive Session:**

On a motion by Mr. Kibler seconded by Mr. Black, Council unanimously agreed to go into Executive Session at 7:25 pm.

a. Receipt of legal advice and discussion of contractual matters related to:

i. Proposed contractual arrangements regarding demolition of City Park property

ii. Proposed contractual arrangements related to the City Administrator’s Employment Contract

1. Receipt of legal advice and other matters covered by attorney-client privilege relating to FAPD personnel matter

**NOTE: Items discussed in Executive Session may result in action by City Council upon its return to**

**general session**

On a motion by Mr. Kibler seconded by Mr. Black, Council unanimously agreed to rejoin regular session.

On a motion by Mr. Oliver seconded by Mr. Kibler, Council unanimously approved the City Administrator’s finding that Deco is a single qualified source for purposes of demolition of the city mall park property and authorized the City Administrator to negotiate the contract and pricing and to authorize using city park funds for that purpose with Deco as discussed in executive session.

**13. Adjourn**

On a motion by Mr. Newton seconded by Mr. Black, Council adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Queen

Administrative Coordinator

City of Forest Acres